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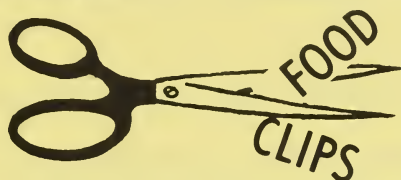
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# Food and Home Notes

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE  
OFFICE OF COMMUNICATION WASHINGTON, D. C.

May 12, 1975



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Buying apples? Look for firm, crisp, well-colored apples. Remember the flavor varies in apples and depends on the stage of maturity at the time the fruit is picked, according to marketing specialists at the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

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Immature apples lack color and usually are poor in flavor. They may also have a shriveled appearance after being held in storage.

\* \* \*

"Scald" (irregular shaped tan or brown areas on apples) may not seriously effect the eating quality of the apple. However, real bruised areas usually have an internal breakdown too.

\* \* \*

Apricots should be plump and juicy looking with a uniform, golden-orange color. Ripe apricots will yield to gentle pressure on the skin.

\* \* \*

Avocados vary in appearance from pear shaped to almost spherical shapes. Some have a rough textured skin and others may be almost smooth.

## RURAL CREDIT PROGRAM

Need to drill a well or otherwise improve your water supply system for irrigation, home use and/or livestock? You may be eligible for a soil and water loan from the Farmers Home Administration (FmHA) of the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

Areas included by these loans are irrigation, farmstead water, drainage, soil and water conservation, forestry, fish farming and land development. You must be a farm operator or farm-owner, a partnership that owns and operates a farm, or a domestic corporation engaged in farming and unable to obtain sufficient credit elsewhere at reasonable rates and terms to finance the project.

To be eligible-- you must also be of legal age and possess the character, industry and ability to carry out the proposed operations. Other eligibility requirements and assistance may be obtained by contacting the Farmers Home Administration county office or by seeking technical assistance from the local Agriculture Stabilization and Conservation Service in your area. Or--you may write to FmHA, USDA, Washington, D.C. 20250.

## FAT CONTENT---FISH---AND YOUR DIET

By David Webb  
Agricultural Research Service USDA

Americans are a calorie-conscious people but still may be missing out on one of the best low-fat foods -- fish -- according to new data reported by a U.S. Department of Agriculture scientist, Dr. Jacob Exler of the Agriculture Research Service. Only about 1 percent of our diets consist of fish.

"The average fat content of fish is about 5 percent, but some of the most popular fish, such as red salmon and albacore tuna, contain 8 to 9 percent fat" Dr. Exler said. Studies of the fat content of about 100 species of fish were described in his recent report.

Like other foods, fish vary considerably in their fat content, according to Dr. Exler, "The seasons and the location of catch have a marked effect on lipid content. For example, the amount of fat in Atlantic herring is at a minimum in the spring and at a maximum in the fall." As might be expected, the study documented that the fat content on Pacific salmon decreases the farther upstream the fish travel in their arduous trip from the ocean.

In presenting data on various fish there is a problem as to what to call them because one species might be known as "rockfish" in the Chesapeake Bay area, and as striped bass in California. Various species of flounder are alternately known as dab, sole, or collectively as flatfish.

Those who are watching their waistlines should know that herring hors d'oeuvres are 16.4 percent fat and cod is 1 percent fat. (These figures pertain to the fish when raw -- sauces and other ingredients used in cooking add to the calorie count.)

The approximate fat content of a 3 oz. serving of beef pot roast is 19%, broiled sirloin steak 32%, lean meat sirloin 7%; hamburger 20%, fried chicken 7%, scrambled eggs 13%.

## COST OF FOOD AT HOME FOR A WEEK (March)

	<u>Low-Cost Plan</u>	<u>Moderate-Cost Plan</u>	<u>Liberal Plan</u>
Families			
Young couple.....	\$27.90	\$35.00	\$41.90
Elderly couple.....	24.90	30.80	36.60
Family of 4 with preschool children.....	39.50	49.10	58.80
Family of 4 with elementary school children.....	47.90	60.00	71.70
Individuals*			
Women			
20-54 years.....	11.30	14.10	16.80
55 years and over.....	10.20	12.60	14.90
Men			
20-54 years.....	14.10	17.70	21.30
55 years and over.....	12.40	15.40	18.40
Children			
1-2 years.....	6.40	7.80	9.30
3-5 years.....	7.70	9.50	11.40
6-8 years.....	10.00	12.50	14.90
9-11 years.....	12.50	15.70	18.70
Girls 12-19 years.....	11.90	14.60	17.40
Boys 12-14 years.....	13.40	16.60	19.90
15-19 years.....	14.70	18.30	21.90

\* Food cost for any family can be figured by totaling costs shown in table for individuals of sex and age of various members of the family as follows:

- o For those eating all meals at home (or carrying some meals from home), use amounts shown.
- o For those eating some meals out, deduct 5 percent from amount in table for each meal not eaten at home. Thus, for a person eating lunch out 5 days a week, subtract 25 percent or one-fourth the cost shown.
- o For guests, include for each meal eaten, 5 percent of amount shown in table for the proper age group.

Next, adjust the total figure if more or fewer than four people generally eat at the family table. Costs shown are for individuals in 4-person families. Adjustment is necessary because larger families tend to buy and use foods more economically than smaller ones. Thus, for a 1-person family, add 20 percent; 2 persons, add 10 percent; 3, add 5 percent; 4, use as is; 5, subtract 5 percent; 6 or more, subtract 10 percent.

Note: Single copies of a paper describing the 1974 USDA food plans, on which these costs are based, are available from the Consumer and Food Economics Institute, Agricultural Research Service, USDA, Hyattsville, Md. 20782.



## NATURE LOVERS

## ----and Trees

"Your Trees Trouble May Be You!" That's the title of a new publication from tree specialists of the Forest Service of the U.S. Department of Agriculture. It explains that there are many "people-caused" major tree injuries---that can be prevented.

Prevention is the best solution to many tree problems. You may, unknowingly, cause injury to trees directly or indirectly, as a result of building and road construction, flooding, soil compaction or air pollution---if you don't know how to prevent problems which result from some of these actions. Even lawn and garden equipment and/or chemicals may seriously damage trees. The more obvious reasons ---original improper planting---or,improper pruning also are major problems.

You can prevent tree injury and disease by awareness, concern and positive action which means...seeking the help of an arborist, nurseryman, state service forester, or extension forester BEFORE you plant or do anything to disturb an existing tree.

Trees are some our most versatile and renewable natural resources---use them and enjoy them---wisely. ("Your Tree's Trouble May Be You" is Ag. Inf. Bulletin No. 372 for sale by GPO, Washington, D.C. 20402, for 70 cents).

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Note: Additional information for the MEDIA and photographs (when applicable) may be obtained from: Shirley Wagener, Editor of Food and Home Notes, Room 535-A, Office of Communication/Press Division, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, D.C. 20250. Or telephone 202-447-5898

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